**In an Interview with TAP: UNIDO Reaffirms its commitment to supporting Tunisia in its transition toward a smart and sustainable industrial sector.**

Responding to a request from the Tunis Afrique Presse Agency (TAP), journalist Bassem Badri conducted an exclusive interview on June 4, 2025, with Mr. Lassaad Ben Hassine, Representative of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) to the Republic of Tunisia. The discussion focused on key areas of cooperation between Tunisia and the organization, as well as prospects for a future strategic partnership to support sustainable industrial transformation.

The interview highlighted that in 2024, UNIDO implemented projects in 119 countries, with a total portfolio exceeding USD 1.09 billion. These efforts contributed to reducing over 82 million tons of CO₂ emissions, thanks to interventions focused on innovation, employment, and clean industries. The UNIDO Representative emphasized the organization's commitment to empowering women and youth and supporting small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in achieving a just and inclusive transition.

In Tunisia, UNIDO is currently implementing 15 development projects valued at approximately USD 40 million, funded by the European Union, Italy, Germany, Switzerland, Japan, Monaco, the Global Environment Facility, and the Multilateral Fund. Since their inception through 2024, these projects have created or preserved more than 6,000 jobs, supported 565 SMEs, and trained thousands of beneficiaries in design, innovation, and value chains.
Initiatives covered the sectors of craft creations, cosmetics and pharmaceutical products, agro-food industries, terroir products, textiles, and 4.0 industries, with a special focus on inland regions and the economic empowerment of women through capacity building.

On the environmental front, UNIDO's interventions in Tunisia have enabled a reduction of 13.3 million tons of CO₂ equivalent through projects linked to the Montreal Protocol and the Kigali Amendment, in addition to initiatives in electric mobility and the circular economy. Moreover, 68,000 tons of denim textile waste were recycled under the “Circular Textile” project, resulting in the production of 224,000 recycled denim jeans and the development of a national roadmap to minimize and recycle textile waste

Mr. Lassaad Ben Hassine noted that consultations have begun with the Ministry of Industry to prepare the new Country Partnership Programme between the Republic of Tunisia and UNIDO, in full alignment with the 2026–2030 Five-Year Plan. The programme will focus on sectors with high employment and investment potential, such as agri-food, textiles, automotive components, decarbonization, the circular economy, digital transformation, and eco-industrial zones. It also includes support for South-South cooperation, youth and women’s empowerment, and institutional capacity building.

Mr. Ben Hassine also praised Tunisia’s competitive advantages, noting that 99% of the staff managing UNIDO’s projects in the country are national experts—an indicator of the effectiveness of investing in human capital.

In conclusion, Mr. Lassaad Ben Hassine expressed his sincere appreciation to the Ministry of Industry, Mines, and Energy, UNIDO’s main partner in Tunisia, and its affiliated institutions, especially the Agency for the Promotion of Industry and Innovation. He also thanked the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Economy and Planning, all technical ministries, and the donor countries and institutions, including the Japan, European Union, Germany, Italy, Monaco, Switzerland, the Global Environment Facility, and the Montreal Protocol Fund.

He concluded by recognizing the efforts of the United Nations (UN) Resident Coordinator and all UN agencies operating in Tunisia for their effective coordination in advancing the Sustainable Development Goals.

To watch the interview in arabic, please click on the following link:

[**https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j6OWDUlM5Y4**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j6OWDUlM5Y4&fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0CMTAAYnJpZBExWVVNRlBVNkgwOEJXWFdhdAEe9wYkCEDdaeK1avS5lk9grtlULzZ4mwOjpJO3g1ODS5NVtctkTB7OAndU4zQ_aem_n_nX-g8KuZcDKAaVs5aAGg)